

## **MEMORANDUM**

**SUBJECT:** Opportunity to Serve as a Collateral-Duty Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Counselor

**FROM:** Velveta Golightly-Howell, Director  
Office of Civil Rights

**TO:** All EPA Employees

I would like to make you aware of an opportunity to serve as a collateral-duty Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Counselor for EPA. Pursuant to 29 C.F.R. 1614, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) requires that the Agency provide sufficient resources for its equal employment opportunity program to ensure its efficient and successful operation, including prompt, fair, and impartial processing of complaints of discrimination. This includes having a cadre of well-trained EEO Counselors that assist the Agency with complaints processing.

Before filing a formal complaint of discrimination, an aggrieved individual (Agency employee and/or applicant) must raise the matter with an EEO Counselor. EEO Counselors play a critical role in the handling and processing of complaints. EEO counselors must maintain neutrality at all times and do not represent employees or management.

EEO Counselors must be able to:

- Explain the complaint process and avenues of redress;
- Help identify and clarify issue(s) and basis(es);
- Gather sufficient information to discuss the matter;
- Communicate with employees and managers at all levels within the organization;
- Write timely, factual and objective reports;
- Meet statutory time limits in the conduct of all counseling duties; and
- Inform participants of the option to use Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), where appropriate, to resolve complaints.

Those selected to serve as collateral-duty EEO Counselors will be trained to:

- Plan and organize an inquiry;
- Prepare required reports;
- Review civil rights and personnel regulations and policies;
- Assist parties in developing resolutions to problems and issues.

I encourage interested employees to consider applying for this important, collateral-duty assignment. While no prior counseling experience is required, previous counseling or mediation experience is helpful. Collateral-duty EEO counselors serve a minimum of two years in the program, and counseling assignments may require up to 20% of official time to complete associated duties. Prior to assuming counseling responsibilities, each new Counselor must complete the Basic EEO 32-hour training course, which is tentatively being scheduled for the week of November 3, 2014 (location to be determined). Counselors are also required to attend eight hours of refresher training each year thereafter. OCR will pay for the 32-hour training, to include lodging and per diem costs, with the office of record bearing the associated travel costs, if any. Interested employees must speak with their supervisors and obtain supervisory concurrence before applying to become a counselor.

**If you are interested in this collateral-duty assignment, please download an application from the [OCR@Work Intranet Site](#) and submit the completed form via email (with required approvals) to Tish Newland, at [newland.letitia@epa.gov](mailto:newland.letitia@epa.gov). Applications will be accepted through Wednesday, September 10, and will be reviewed by a panel of EEO Officials from HQ, the Regions, and Labs. The panel will then provide recommendations to OCR Senior Management for final approval of selections. All applicants, their supervisors and the respective EEO Officer of selected employees will be notified at the completion of the selection process. Notification will be via email and provided no later than October 1.**

Questions regarding the application process may be directed to Tish Newland, Area Director, Office of Civil Rights – Cincinnati-Ada-Ann Arbor Labs, (513) 569-7913, Sheryl Mason, OCR Headquarters Title VII Team, (202) 564-1746, or to the local EEO Officer or Lab OCR Area Director.

Thank you for your consideration.